

enlighten our community on the agenda of spiritual wisdom and good government based on our God-given conscience and responsibility toward others.

It is indeed fitting for those of us who subscribe to the Judeo-Christian Faith to pause and reflect on the important role that Rev. Dr. Horton plays in the day-to-day affairs of his congregation. I want to acknowledge the tremendous work he is doing in constantly guiding not only the members of the Greater New Bethel Baptist Church, but also our community at large. He has truly exemplified the example of Christ as the Good Shepherd, and is wisely leading his flock of believers to the demands of Faith and to the works of Charity, sharing with them the words of God's wisdom and salvation emanating from the Gospel.

His consecration and vigilance over the spiritual growth and socio-moral well-being of his congregation have impacted the lives of countless people, propelling him into one of our state's charismatic preachers. Accordingly, my constituents in the 17th Congressional District's northern sector are the fortunate beneficiaries of Rev. Horton's teachings and ministry, especially in his advocacy to reach out both by way of word and example our unconditional love and commitment to the children, the elderly, the poor, the disenfranchised and the less fortunate among us. We have learned from him the centrality of God in our daily lives, conscious of the fact that the mandate of our Faith and the obligation of our citizenship must characterize our service to those who could least fend for themselves.

His countless awards aptly described him as a forceful, courageous and visionary leader not only of the religious community, but also our society at large, firmly compelled by the fact that the Greater New Bethel Baptist Church in Miami is indeed part of a larger network of institutions that serve as the voice and conscience of our community. Rev. Dr. Horton is fully living up to his vocation as a pastor par excellence. His standards for learning, caring and achieving, especially among the youth, have won for him the accolades of our community. Public and private agencies, along with countless organizations, have oftentimes cited him for his resolute consecration to the Truth of the Gospel, along with his uncompromising stance on justice and equal opportunity for all.

Moreover, his crusades in teaching our youth have become legendary. He has gained the utmost confidence of parents, teachers and countless others from diverse professions who see in him as a no-nonsense motivator. They are wont to entrust him with the future of their children and families, genuinely confident that they will learn from him the tenets of personal excellence, buoyed up by an uncompromising commitment to hard work and discipline.

Our community is deeply touched and comforted by his undaunted leadership, compassion and personal warmth. As head of one of the largest Baptist Churches in Florida, Rev. Dr. Horton preaches and lives by the adage that the grace of God's Providence and the quest for His Justice must buttress our common quest for personal integrity and professional achievement in the service of others. As a man of God and as an indomitable leader in our community, he has rightfully earned our deepest respect and genuine admiration.

This is the great legacy the Rev. Dr. G. David Horton is unselfishly sharing with us on

the occasion of his 20th Pastoral Anniversary. I am privileged indeed to be blessed with his friendship and confidence. And I am deeply grateful that he continues to teach us to live by his noble ethic of always loving God and serving our fellow men.

IN PROTEST OF RECEPTION FOR CASTRO GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS

HON. PETER DEUTSCH

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 21, 1999

Mr. DEUTSCH. Mr. Speaker, I stand today to protest tonight's reception honoring two officials of the Castro regime, which makes a statement to Cuban dictator Fidel Castro and the world that the United States considers a Communist dictator to be a good trading partner.

I am troubled by the fact that tonight two of Castro's officials will be hosted at a Capitol Hill event for the first time in 40 years. Maria de la Luz B'Hammel and Igor Montero Brito should not have been granted visas to visit the United States, and they should not be welcomed as spokespeople for the opening up of trade between the United States and Cuba.

It is important that we remain vigilant in bringing to light the continuing deplorable behavior of Castro and his regime. Castro uses food as a weapon, cutting off the rations of those who speak out against his destructive and oppressive policies. He has destroyed his own country, and trade with him will not only be an affront to American ideals of human rights and freedom, but will also be disastrous for our economy.

There are those who look upon trade with the Castro regime as a panacea for the problems of our agriculture industry. In reality, trade with Castro will actually open up our markets to cheap products made with cheap labor in Cuba. Castro's agricultural products will be inexpensive because they will be made by overworked and underpaid workers in a country with no labor rights. His products may harm the environment, as they will be produced by a government without a system of checks and balances over environmental policies. And they will be dumped on the U.S. market, because Castro has never possessed nor does he now possess the ability to cooperate meaningfully with other nations.

Trade with Cuba will eventually be possible, but never under this tyrannical regime. To suggest otherwise, as tonight's reception does, is to forget our commitment to the ideals of freedom and democracy—ideals that Castro does not and will never share.

FOLIC ACID PROMOTION AND BIRTH DEFECTS PREVENTION ACT OF 1999

HON. LUCILLE ROYBAL-ALLARD

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 21, 1999

Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD. Mr. Speaker, today, I, along with my colleague Congresswoman JO ANN EMERSON, am introducing the Folic Acid Promotion and Birth Defects Prevention Act of

1999. This bipartisan bill, with 102 Democratic and Republican original cosponsors, is being introduced in the Senate by Senators ABRAHAM, KOHL and BOND.

The Folic Acid Promotion and Birth Defects Prevention Act of 1999 will provide for a national folic acid education program to prevent birth defects.

Each year an estimated 2,500 babies are born in the United States with serious birth defects of the brain and spine, called neural tube defects. These neural tube defects cause crippling lifelong physical disabilities and at times, even death.

However, up to 70% of neural tube birth defects could be prevented if women of child-bearing age consumed 400 micrograms of folic acid daily. That means women need to eat a healthy diet and take a daily multivitamin. It's that simple.

Women need to be taking folic acid before and during their first trimester of pregnancy because these neural tube defects occur very early in pregnancy, before most women know that they are pregnant and because roughly 50% of all pregnancies in the U.S. are unplanned.

The problem is that the majority of women are not aware of the benefits of folic acid. A 1997 March of Dimes national survey found that only 30% of women take a multivitamin with folic acid before pregnancy. There is an urgent need to teach women about the importance of increasing their consumption of folic acid by taking a daily vitamin pill, eating more fortified cereal grain products and eating food naturally rich in folic acid.

Nationwide, Hispanic women have the highest rates of neural tube defects. In fact, in my home state of California, Hispanic mothers have the highest number of cases of neural tube defects than any other racial group and Mexican-born mothers have twice the risk of having babies with neural tube defects compared to U.S.-born mothers.

The Folic Acid Promotion and Birth Defects Prevention Act of 1999 will amend the Public Health Service Act to provide for a national folic acid education program to prevent birth defects. This bill authorizes the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, in partnership with states and local public and private entities, to launch an education and public awareness campaign, conduct research to identify effective strategies for increasing folic acid consumption by women of reproductive capacity, and evaluate the effectiveness of these strategies.

The Folic Acid Promotion and Birth Defects Prevention Act of 1999 is supported by leading health organizations, including the March of Dimes, Association of Women's Health, Obstetric and Neonatal Nurses, National Association of Pediatric Nurse Associates and Practitioners, Council for Responsible Nutrition, American Association of University Affiliated Programs for Persons with Developmental Disabilities, American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists, American College of Nurse-Midwives, American Public Health Association, Council of Women's and Infants' Specialty Hospitals, Easter Seals, National Association of County and City Health Officials, National Women's Health Network, and the Spina Bifida Association of America.

I would like to recognize the March of Dimes, the National Council on Folic Acid and

the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention for their leadership and steadfast commitment to this issue. I would especially like to thank Jody Adams and her daughter, the March of Dimes Ambassador Kelsey Adams, for their hard work in publicizing this simple, yet highly effective, prevention strategy.

Finally, I would like to thank my colleagues, Congresswoman JO ANN EMERSON, as well as Senators ABRAHAM, KOHL and BOND for their hard work in raising awareness about this vitally important issue. By getting the message out, we can help families across the country have healthy babies and save the lives of thousands of babies each year.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. LUIS V. GUTIERREZ

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 21, 1999

Mr. GUTIERREZ. Mr. Speaker, on the afternoon of Monday, July 19, 1999, I was unavoidably absent from this chamber and therefore missed rollcall vote number 310 (H.R. 1477), rollcall vote number 309 (H. Con. Res. 121) and rollcall vote number 308 (H.R. 1033). I want the RECORD to show that if I had been able to be present in this chamber when these votes were cast, I would have voted "yea" on each of them.

TEACHER EMPOWERMENT ACT

SPEECH OF

HON. JOSEPH CROWLEY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 20, 1999

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 1995) to amend the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 to empower teachers, improve student achievement through high-quality professional development for teachers, reauthorize the Reading Excellence Act, and for other purposes:

Mr. CROWLEY. Mr. Chairman, I rise today to oppose H.R. 1995, the Teacher Empowerment Act, and support the Martinez substitute.

As I looked over the materials I had received regarding H.R. 1995, I found myself wondering how the Republican leadership could offer an education bill, a bill for teachers, that is not supported by educators themselves. Nor do parents, Boards of Education, or many others concerned about our education system support it. In fact, the American Federation of Teachers, the National Education Association, the Council of Chief State School Officers, the National Parent Teachers Association, the National Association of State Boards of Education, Council of Great City Schools, the New York State Education Department, and the New York City Board of Education each oppose this bill. Does this seem right? How can the American public have faith that we are going to improve their schools when nearly all education groups oppose the proposed education bill?

As a newly elected Member, I can tell you that parents in my congressional district are

concerned. They want smaller classes. They want assurances that money isn't going to be taken from their low-income school districts and transferred to districts with more resources. They don't want rhetoric. They want results.

H.R. 1995 takes away the guarantee of smaller classes by rolling class size reduction funds into a block grant for professional development purposes and class size reduction. While class size reduction is a "mandatory use" under H.R. 1995, there is no commitment that serious funds will be used for that purpose.

We should not reverse the process that was put into place last year when a bipartisan commitment was made to fund the first installment of a program aimed specifically at reducing class sizes. Instead, we should show our local school districts that we will be there with the followup funds so they can retain the teachers they are hiring this year and continue their class reduction efforts.

Furthermore, H.R. 1995 severely undermines the original goal of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act—to provide assistance to the neediest students. This bill fails to direct sufficient resources to schools that need the most help: the highest poverty districts in each state and district.

Overall, H.R. 1995 would divert resources away from districts, like many of those in New York City, that need the money the most. Altering the funding formula from 80 percent of the funds being allocated to high-poverty districts to having only 50 percent being allocated to districts, combined with the loss of class size reduction funds, would result in a \$22 million loss for New York City's public schools. I am sure that this result will be mimicked in cities and towns across the country.

I know my Republican colleagues will argue that a hold harmless provision has been added to the bill. However, that hold harmless is for the first year only. After that, there is no guarantee that funding for class size reduction will not be dramatically decreased.

We must not abandon our commitment to class size reduction and to helping our neediest students. The Martinez substitute ensures that we honor our commitment to class size reduction. Additionally, the Martinez substitute does not alter the intent of the ESEA, to assist the neediest school districts. We should pass the Martinez substitute, and, if not, we should defeat H.R. 1995.

DICK STRAHM RETIRES AFTER A QUARTER CENTURY AS HEAD COACH OF THE UNIVERSITY OF FINDLAY OILERS

HON. MICHAEL G. OXLEY

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 21, 1999

Mr. OXLEY. Mr. Speaker, I am honored today to salute my good friend Dick Strahm at the close of his 25-year career as head football coach of the University of Findlay Oilers.

The Dick Strahm Era at U of F began in 1975, when he arrived from Kansas State to breathe new life into the program. He immediately set out to recruit the best players available, going all out to lure top prospects to Findlay despite significant shortfalls in avail-

able scholarship money. His dedication and commitment to the program were apparent from the beginning, as his team went undefeated in 1978 and won the Division II national title in 1979.

Coach Strahm's successes carried into the 80s, as the 1985 team compiled U of F's first 10-game winning streak in history. The 90s, though, proved to be his best decade at the helm, as he coached his players to an 83–20–3 overall record, a 27-game winning streak, and three more national championships.

During his 24-season tenure with the Oilers, Dick Strahm presided over just two losing seasons, and compiled an overall head coaching record of 183 wins, 64 losses, and five ties. He was named National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics Coach of the Year four times, and NAIA District 22 Coach of the Year 12 times. The Oilers will certainly miss his leadership on the field in the seasons ahead.

I join Coach Strahm's current and former players, the University of Findlay family, and the entire city of Findlay in thanking him for his years of service and devotion. Congratulations, Dick, on building a successful program that will bear your legacy for years to come.

TRIBUTE TO JOHN CARROLL

HON. RON PACKARD

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 21, 1999

Mr. PACKARD. Mr. Speaker, I would like to pay tribute to John Carroll who is a student of Chapparral High School in Temecula Valley, California. During the first session of the Summer 1999 House Republican Page Program, John represented the 48th Congressional District of California.

During his time in our Nation's Capital, John excelled in assisting the House as a Page. However, his exceptional dedication and keen interest in government is nothing new. John is the founder of the Young Republicans' Club at his High School and he has served as a volunteer for the American Red Cross. John's strong leadership skills and devotion to each task he undertakes have helped him become both an exceptional student and citizen.

Mr. Speaker, I was proud to have such an enthusiastic young man represent my district in the House Page Program. I would like to thank him for his hard work and dedication, and wish him the best of luck in all his future endeavors.

AMERICAN EMBASSY SECURITY ACT OF 1999

SPEECH OF

HON. VERNON J. EHLERS

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, July 19, 1999

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 2415) to enhance security of United States missions and personnel overseas, to authorize appropriations for the Department of State for fiscal year 2000, and for other purposes.

Mr. EHLERS. Mr. Chairman, I would like to thank the gentleman from New York and the